

over the period of time such services are required to be rendered, or such membership privileges are required to be made available. Thus, the prepaid dues income shall be included in gross income ratably over the period of the membership contract. For example, Corporation X, a membership organization, which files its income tax returns on a calendar year basis, elects, for its taxable year beginning January 1, 1961, to report its prepaid dues income in accordance with the provisions of section 456. On March 31, 1961, it sells a 2-year membership for \$48 payable in advance, the membership to extend from May 1, 1961, to April 30, 1963. X shall include in its gross income for the taxable year 1961  $\frac{8}{24}$  of the \$48, or \$16, and for the taxable year 1962  $\frac{12}{24}$  of the \$48, or \$24, and for the taxable year 1963  $\frac{4}{24}$  of the \$48, or \$8.

(b) For purposes of determining the period or periods over which the liability of the taxpayer exists, and for purposes of allocating prepaid dues income to such periods, the taxpayer may aggregate similar transactions during the taxable year in any reasonable manner, provided the method of aggregation and allocation is consistently followed.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967]

#### § 1.456-4 Cessation of liability or existence.

(a) If a taxpayer has elected to apply the provisions of section 456 to a trade or business in connection with which prepaid dues income is received, and if the taxpayer's liability to render services or make available membership privileges ends for any reason, as for example, because of the cancellation of a membership then so much of the prepaid dues income attributable to such liability as was not includible in the taxpayer's gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years shall be included in gross income for the taxable year in which such liability ends. This paragraph shall not apply to amounts includible in gross income under § 1.456-7.

(b) If a taxpayer which has elected to apply the provisions of section 456 ceases to exist, then the prepaid dues income which was not includible in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years shall be included

in the taxpayer's gross income for the taxable year in which such cessation of existence occurs. This paragraph shall not apply to amounts includible in gross income under § 1.456-7.

(c) If a taxpayer is a party to a transaction to which section 381(a) applies and the taxpayer's method of accounting with respect to prepaid dues income is used by the acquiring corporation under the provisions of section 381(c)(4), then neither the liability nor the existence of the taxpayer shall be deemed to have ended or ceased. In such cases see section 381(c)(4) and the regulations thereunder for the treatment of the portion of prepaid dues income which was not included in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years.

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#### § 1.456-5 Definitions and other rules.

(a) *Prepaid dues income.* (1) The term "prepaid dues income" means any amount for membership dues includible in gross income which is received by a membership organization in connection with, and is directly attributable to, a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time which extends beyond the close of the taxable year in which such amount is received.

(2) For purposes of section 456, prepaid dues income does not include amounts received by a taxpayer in connection with sales of memberships on a prepaid basis where the taxpayer does not have the liability to furnish the services or make available the membership privileges. For example, where a taxpayer has a contract with several membership organizations to sell memberships in such organizations and retains a portion of the amounts received from the sale of such memberships and remits the balance to the membership organizations, the amounts retained by such taxpayer represent commissions and do not constitute prepaid dues income for purposes of section 456.

(b) *Liability.* The term "liability" means a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time which does not exceed 36 months. Thus, if during the taxable year a taxpayer sells memberships for more than